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Carlton, Mabel Mason.

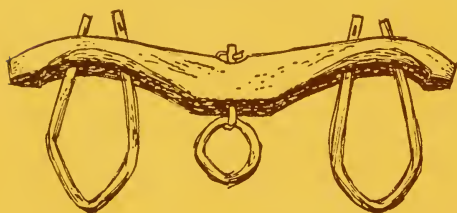
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Abraham Lincoln, "Savior of  
His Country."

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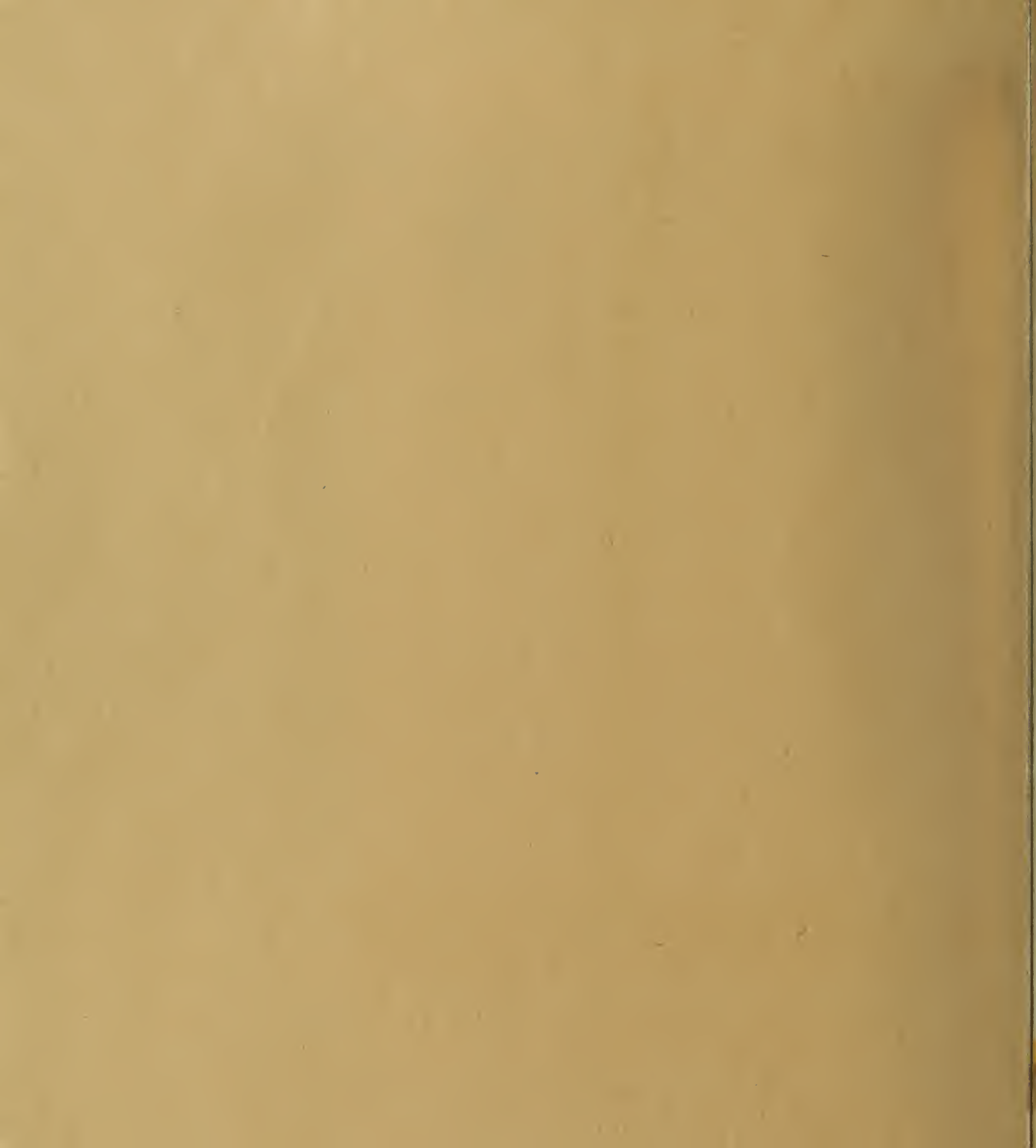
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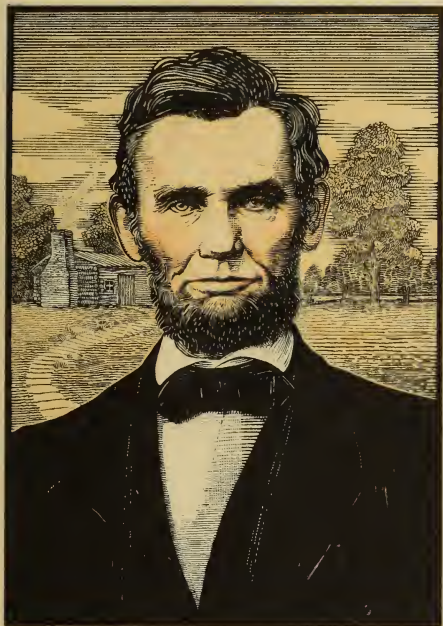
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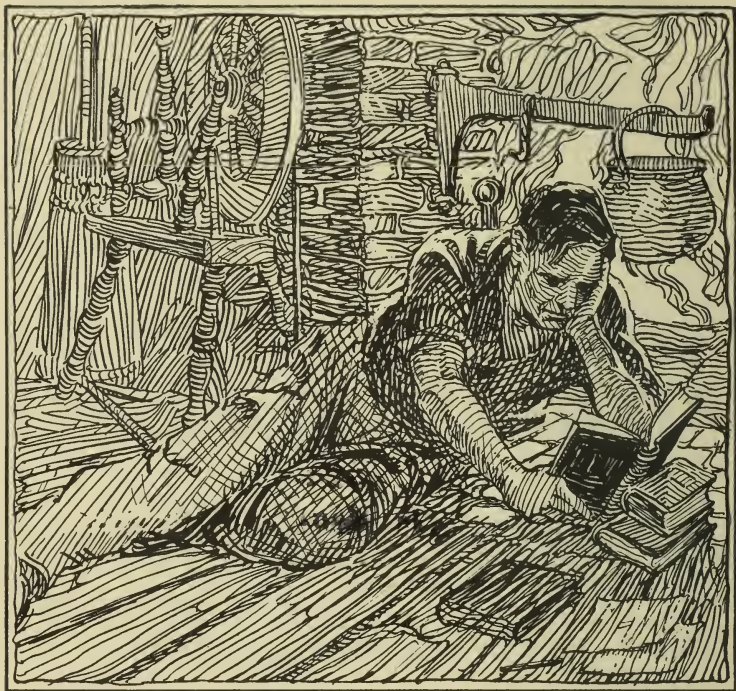






# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

*"Savior of His Country"*



Lincoln's early law training was derived from borrowed books, read by the light of a pitch-knot fire.

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# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

*"Savior of his Country"*

BY

MABEL MASON CARLTON

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*A. Lincoln*

That Government of the  
People, by the People, for  
the People, shall not per-  
ish from the Earth.....



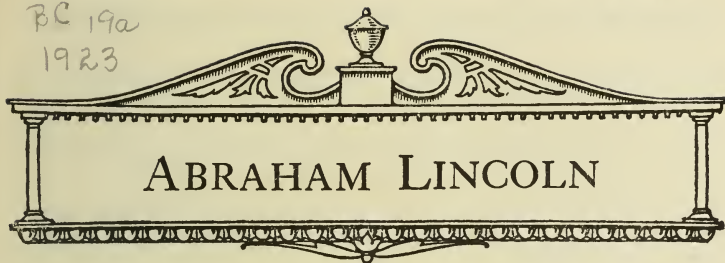


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*"Savior of his Country"*

**B**ORN in a log cabin, he ascended to the White House; attending school less than one year, he became a great orator and writer; beset with disappointments, and often defeated in his campaigns for office, he rose above disappointments and defeats and became one of the most revered and beloved of statesmen in all history. So reads the romance of Abraham Lincoln, the "Savior of his Country."

Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States, was born on February 12, 1809, in a rough log cabin on a small farm in the backwoods of Kentucky, in what is now Larue County. The United States Government has recently inclosed this sacred hut in a great stone memorial, thus seeking to preserve the birthplace of one of its most loyal sons. Lincoln's father, Thomas Lincoln, who could neither read nor write (although Mrs. Lincoln did finally teach him to sign his name) was not energetic nor ambitious, and he could not earn a good living from the hard frontier life; Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, was gentle and religious, and she taught her son many stories from the Bible.

In 1816, after having lived in several places, the family moved to Indiana, working its way through nearly one hundred miles of forest—Abraham, then seven, using his axe and gun like his father. During the first winter, they lived in a three-sided shed, with a buffalo-skin to close it. A year later, a log cabin was completed, but it had only the earth as a floor. The next year Mrs. Lincoln

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died. When a grown man, Abraham wrote of her: "All that I am and all that I hope to be I owe to my sainted mother."

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## EDUCATION

LINCOLN went to school "by littles," as he said, for about nine years; but all his schooling together did not amount to one full year. He taught himself to read, cipher, and write. He had no pencils or paper, but wrote his lessons and did his sums on a wooden shovel with a piece of charcoal; and when the shovel was covered, he shaved it off clean and used it again. Later, when he did secure pieces of paper, he copied his compositions on them with a pen made from a wild turkey's quill and ink from blackberry root.

Although he had to work very hard helping his father clear the forest, plough ground, plant corn, gather and shuck it, or doing odd jobs for neighboring farmers, he read every book he could lay his hands on. He often walked miles to borrow a book, and once told a friend that he had "read through every book that he had heard of within a circuit of fifty miles." He learned a large part of the Bible by heart, read and re-read *Arabian Nights*, *Aesop's Fables*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Plutarch's Lives*, a history of the United States, the lives of Franklin and Washington, and the speeches of Henry Clay.

Lincoln was endowed with a great deal of native wit, a ready tongue, and the ability to tell stories. Because of these gifts, he was always a popular figure at house-raising and husking-bees, where he entertained the country-folk with his speeches and funny stories. His natural gift for speech-making, coupled with a great love of justice, made him consider law as a profession. But, because he had no law books of his own and no money with which to buy any, he often walked twelve miles to the office of an acquaintance to read a volume on the laws of Indiana.

At nineteen, Lincoln stood six feet four inches in his bare feet. His arms and legs were unusually long, and his hands and feet huge. "Every inch a big rough clodhopper he looked, in his deerskin trousers held up by a single suspender. Shrunk tight and short for

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his legs, they showed several inches of bluish skin above his cowhide shoes, that were worn only on Sundays or in very cold weather. A coarse home-spun shirt covered his gaunt shoulders and arms." His strength was equal to that of three men; he could lift and carry a pair of logs and could outrun and outwrestle any man or boy in the countryside. Lincoln did not drink, as was the custom in his day, neither did he use tobacco.

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## DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI

**I**N 1828, when he was nineteen, Lincoln was given charge of a neighbor's flatboat and sent on an eighteen-hundred-mile journey down the Mississippi River to New Orleans to market vegetables and bacon among the cotton planters. On this trip he saw many new and strange sights, and henceforth longed to see and know more of the world.

Two years later, March, 1830, the Lincoln family (Lincoln's father had married again), in wagons drawn by heavy oxtteams, moved to Illinois and built another log cabin. Abraham split wooden rails to fence in ten acres of land, and hence, years later, when a candidate for the presidency of the United States, he was nicknamed the "rail splitter." The same winter, 1830, he split fourteen hundred rails to pay a woman for a pair of trousers which she made for him. The next spring he made a second trip to New Orleans on a flatboat, and saw for the first time negroes chained, whipped, and scourged, put on a block and sold to the highest bidder. It is said that the sight made him sick at heart and that he then and there pledged himself to fight slavery if ever the opportunity came. Little did he dream then that his name was to go down in history as the great liberator of these oppressed peoples.

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## WAR, POLITICS, AND BUSINESS

**R**ETURNING from this voyage, Lincoln settled in New Salem, Illinois, where he lived for several years. At first he did odd jobs about town. Later he clerked in Denton Offutt's store, finding

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time to study *Kirkham's Grammar*, "lying full length on the counter with his head on a parcel of calico," and to spin his famous yarns to the men and boys who gathered at the village store to exchange gossip, and to discuss every known subject from cock-fighting to politics and religion. Here he won the lasting nickname of "Honest Abe." He is said to have walked two miles to correct a mistake in change of six cents. But within a year the store "petered out," and Lincoln, now twenty-two, was without a job.

When the Indian chief, Black Hawk, who had agreed to stay west of the Mississippi, broke the treaty in 1832 and led his warriors back into northern Illinois, the Governor called for volunteer soldiers. Volunteers from New Salem chose Lincoln as their Captain. But within a few months the Black Hawk war was over, and Lincoln and his men never saw active service.

Lincoln, ambitious to enter politics, had, that same spring, 1832, written to a local paper announcing that he would be a candidate in the autumn election for the State legislature. Although he secured very nearly all of the votes of his immediate neighborhood, he was not elected.

With a Mr. Berry as partner, Lincoln now bought three small stores in New Salem and combined them into one. The purchasing was done on credit, neither Berry nor Lincoln having any money. But this business venture was not successful. Berry spent his time drinking, and Lincoln neglected business to read literature and study law. Early in 1833 the business "winked out," as Lincoln said, and left the firm owing \$1,200. Berry died soon after, and Lincoln assumed the entire debt. He might have freed himself by declaring bankruptcy, but he chose rather to pay every dollar of this debt, although it took about fifteen years of struggling and saving to do so.

Lincoln soon obtained the position of assistant surveyor to John Calhoun, then surveyor of the county. It is said that Lincoln's first surveyor's chain was a grapevine, but he became extremely accurate, and continued surveying until he was able to start as a

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lawyer. Meanwhile he was appointed local postmaster; and because the mails were small and infrequent, he "carried the office around in his hat."

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## IN THE ILLINOIS STATE LEGISLATURE

"CAN'T the party raise any better material than that?" asked a bystander, as he looked at Lincoln, who was about to make a speech in his second campaign for State legislator in 1834. After Lincoln's speech the bystander exclaimed that he knew more than all the other candidates put together. This time Lincoln was elected, and thereafter he was elected for three further terms, of two years each, making eight years in all.

Lincoln, in 1834, went to Vandalia, then the State capital, in a brand-new suit of "store clothes" bought with money loaned by a friend. Here he met Stephen A. Douglas, who for years was to be his rival in more than one affair. In 1836, at the age of twenty-seven, Lincoln was admitted to the bar, and went to live in Springfield, the new State capital. On a borrowed horse, and with little money, he rode up to the store of an acquaintance, Mr. Speed, and asked if he could buy bedding and have credit until Christmas, when he hoped to be a success at law. "If I fail in this," he said, "I do not know that I can ever pay you." Speed offered to share his own large bed with him in his room over the store. Lincoln carried his saddle bags up to the room, dropped them on the floor, and came back beaming with delight. "Well, Speed, I've moved!" he said.

The legislature of Illinois, in which Lincoln spent eight years, was a school in which his power and wisdom as a statesman first developed. He lived close to the people, and believed in their judgment as the surest guide to right in public affairs. As leader of the "Long Nine"—a nickname for the nine members, all over six feet tall, from his county of Sangamon, he worked hard to give the State, railroads, canals, and banks. At this time, Lincoln proved his great courage in standing almost alone against the whole State

*Lincoln Memorial University*

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legislature. The Abolitionists (people in favor of freeing the slaves) were causing considerable agitation over slavery, and the Illinois legislature passed resolutions condemning their acts and stating that the Congress had no power to interfere with slavery in the Southern States. Lincoln drew up and placed before the House a protest against these resolutions, stating that "the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy." Only one other man would sign this protest with Lincoln, and that man was not seeking reelection to the legislature.

During these eight years, Lincoln was also practicing law, and he became widely known and admired as he rode about the country with the district judge from one court house to another. In 1843, he entered a law partnership with William Herndon. In his rules for lawyers, Lincoln says: "Resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your own judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer." He followed his own advice, and would defend only such cases as he believed to be absolutely right and just. Once he gave up a case in the middle of a testimony when he found that he was on the wrong side. He had the habit of telling stories that not only spread good humor in the courtroom, but that made his case clear: he usually argued with great sympathy and tenderness, but when enraged by a falsehood or injustice, his attack was as piercing and deadly as a dagger. Juries and judges came to feel that Lincoln's side in a case was almost invariably the right side. He soon became one of the best lawyers in Illinois.

When a young man, Lincoln had won the love of Ann Rutledge. When she died, his grief was so great his friends feared that he would lose his mind. Years later, in 1842, Lincoln and Douglas were rivals for the heart and hand of Mary Todd, a handsome young woman from Kentucky. Lincoln was the victor, and they were married on November 4, 1842. Four boys were born to them, one of whom, Robert T. Lincoln, later became United States Ambassador to London. Lincoln's married life was not entirely happy, but he loved his children dearly, and whenever possible he was their constant companion.



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## LINCOLN AND SLAVERY

WHEN the thirteen colonies of America became independent of England and formed themselves into a nation, slavery was permitted by law in every State. But as time went on, the Northern States developed industries which did not need negro labor, and the Southern States grew tobacco, cotton, and rice, which gave employment to great numbers of negroes. So, naturally, negroes were used more and more in the South. Finally, the Northern States passed laws against the holding of negroes as slaves; the Southern States did not pass such laws, because they wanted the negro slaves to work in their fields. While many slaves were treated kindly by their masters, others were not. There were no laws in the South to protect the slaves. They were bought and sold as so much property, and were compelled to work long and hard for no pay except such food, clothing, and shelter as their masters chose to give them.

In 1847, Lincoln took his seat in the United States House of Representatives to serve a two-year term. Here he declared that: "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong." He fought for a plan to keep slavery out of the territory from Texas to Oregon, which had just been taken from Mexico in war. He declared that he voted for this plan "at least forty times," but to no avail. He also tried to get a law passed to free slaves in the District of Columbia, but failed.

His term in Congress ending, he was not reelected; so he returned to his law practice. He was greatly in need of money. Besides supporting his own family, he sent money to his father, his step-mother, and a step-brother, and after his father's death, he paid off a mortgage on the old home. He "rode the circuit," a "gray shawl about his shoulders, carrying a carpet bag, fat with papers and clothing, and a faded green cotton umbrella without a handle, tied with a piece of twine."

In 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska Bill became a law. It was introduced into the Senate by Douglas, and permitted the two new



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territories of Kansas and Nebraska to decide for themselves, when they asked to be admitted to the Union, whether they would be free or slave States. The North realized that this new law opened to slavery the great territory of the northwest, from which nine States have since been made. Lincoln gave the warning cry: "Slavery is spreading like wildfire over the country." Slavery became the chief political problem of the country. The Republican Party was born at this time, with Abraham Lincoln as one of the founders. At the first Republican National Convention held in Philadelphia, 1856, Lincoln was conspicuously mentioned as candidate for Vice-Presidency, but was not nominated.

Senator Stephen A. Douglas came back to Illinois and boldly defended his Kansas-Nebraska bill; whereupon Lincoln made answer in a three-hour speech which made him the champion in the great cause of human liberty and which marked the opening of the final conflict between the North and the South. In 1858 the Democrats of Illinois nominated Douglas as Senator; and the Republicans declared that: "The Honorable Abraham Lincoln is our first and only choice for United States Senator." Cheering throngs packed the floor and galleries of the State House at Springfield to hear Lincoln's speech of acceptance. His words have come down to us, ringing with truth and justice: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe that this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."

Lincoln now challenged Douglas to meet him in a series of debates. Seven debates were held. People came from all over the country to the towns in Illinois where the debates took place, to hear these speakers. It is said that at one place, when the town could no longer hold the crowds, thousands spent the night in the fields, their "campfires spread up and down the valley for a mile, making it look as if an army were gathered there." Douglas rode on a special train; Lincoln in a crowded car with the people. Douglas once arrived in an elegant carriage drawn by four white horses;

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Lincoln came in an old-fashioned, canvas-covered pioneer wagon. Douglas's arguments were fluent and brilliant; Lincoln's were straightforward and simple, reaching the very hearts of the people. Indeed, as Lincoln lost himself in his subject, his voice rang with a deep, strange beauty, his sad eyes kindled, and his tall, gaunt figure acquired a certain majesty.

Douglas argued that people had the right to choose for themselves whether or not they would have slaves. Lincoln argued that no man had the right to be master of another; that slavery was wrong and that it must be abolished. Although Douglas won the election as Senator, Lincoln was soon to have a greater honor,—that of becoming President of the United States.

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## PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

AFTER the debates with Douglas, Lincoln's reputation as a great orator spread throughout the country, and he was invited to address audiences in every part of the United States. *The New York Tribune* said of his speech at Cooper Institute in New York, February, 1860, "No man ever made such an impression in his first appeal to a New York audience." This famous speech was printed and quoted everywhere, and it aided in securing his election as President.

As the presidential election of 1860 drew near, intense bitterness spread between the North and the South. Some of the Southern States were determined to withdraw from the Union rather than submit to a "*Black Republican*," a term of contempt for Lincoln, who believed in freedom for men with black skins. But on November 6, 1860, Abraham was elected the sixteenth President of the United States. The next February, seven Southern States—South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas—had left the Union, formed the Confederate States of America, and elected Jefferson Davis as their President.

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In Lincoln's inaugural address, delivered March 4, 1861, he said: "The Union of these States (United States) is perpetual. No State upon its own mere motion can lawfully get out of the Union." Later he said: "The country has placed me at the helm of the ship; I'll try to steer her through." Many were those who shook their heads and asked: "Will that awkward old backwoodsman really get that ship through?" Lincoln, although he did not always see his way far ahead, appealed to his enemies as well as to his friends to "Forget ourselves and join hands like brothers to save the Union."

Considerate, gentle, tender, firm as a rock when he made up his mind, yet with a power to inspire and hold his followers, through years of suffering and failure, steady to their purpose, Abraham Lincoln finally proved himself the most popular and beloved statesman in America. He loved the common people, and they trusted him. Often his Cabinet suggested that he write his state papers in more elegant form, but he continued to write them in his own simple language, saying, "The people will understand."

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## BEGINNING OF CIVIL WAR

VIRGINIA, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina joined the Southern Federation which chose Richmond, Virginia, as its capital and selected Robert E. Lee as Commander-in-Chief of its army. On April 12, 1861, the Confederacy began the Civil War by firing upon the Union flag flying over Fort Sumter, South Carolina.

Lincoln, who from the very first declared the war to be for the Union, not against slavery, issued a call for 75,000 volunteers and made George B. McClellan chief commander of the Northern army. In July the battle of Bull Run, the first real fight of the war, was a victory for the South. The North was stunned by this blow. For months and months General McClellan organized and drilled an excellent army, but made no move against the South. It remained for General U. S. Grant to win the first Northern victories. Early in the winter of 1862 he captured Ft. Henry and Ft. Donelson.

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When the commander of Ft. Donelson asked for terms, Grant replied: "No terms except an unconditional and immediate surrender." The Northerners hailed Grant with delight and said that his initials (U. S.) stood for "Unconditional Surrender." Lincoln finally dismissed McClellan and made Grant commander of the Northern forces.

But the North was to meet defeat after defeat, and Lincoln, whose small son, Willie, died at this time, grew more and more tender toward the suffering. He often visited the camps, hospitals, and prisons, talked with officers and men and won their confidence and love. It is said that throughout the war a Bible lay on his desk, that he read it often, and many times spent all night in prayer.

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### FREEDOM FOR SLAVES

ALTHOUGH Lincoln put the saving of the Union as the first great purpose of the war, by 1862, he knew that the abolishing of slavery should be made the second great purpose of the war. Thousands of slaves were escaping to the North, and, in July, 1862, the Congress passed a law permitting these escaped slaves to enter the Northern army, and allowing them and their families freedom. Lincoln first tried to have the slaves freed gradually and to have the Government pay their owners for their loss, but the South would not agree to this plan. Then in his own quiet, sincere way, without even consulting his Cabinet, Lincoln framed the mighty sentences of the *Emancipation Proclamation*. But the time was not yet ripe for announcing this proclamation. The Northern Army was defeated at Cedar Mountain and in the second battle of Bull Run, and was now facing Lee, who had crossed the Potomac into Maryland. Lincoln told his Cabinet that he had made a promise to himself and his Maker, that if God gave the victory in the approaching battle, he would consider that God had decided his questions in favor of the slaves. It seems that God was on Lincoln's side, because on September 17 the Northerners were victorious at Antietam.

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Five days later, Lincoln issued the preliminary *Emancipation Proclamation*, making four million slaves, "On the first of January, 1863,—thenceforth and forever free."

On New Year's day, when Lincoln signed the final draft of the *Proclamation*, he said: "If my name ever gets into history, it will be for this act, and my whole soul is in it."

But the war was not yet over. The North suffered terrible defeats at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, but victory awaited them at Gettysburg and Vicksburg. Lincoln kept a large map of the United States on his wall and carefully followed the movements of the armies. Day and night he studied the campaign, pored over military books on strategy, planned movements with his generals, and often directed his leaders. But his heart ached for the men on the battlefields and for their anxious families at home. His face became thin and drawn, his eyes heavy and sunken, and he remarked: "I feel as though I shall never be glad again." Once when a Union general urged him to execute twenty soldiers for deserters he answered: "There are already too many weeping widows in the United States. For God's sake don't ask me to add to the number, for I won't do it."

The autumn of 1863 brought the Northern victory at Chattanooga. The next spring saw Grant beginning his attack on Richmond, with heavy losses at Wilderness, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor. Although Lincoln's term of office was coming to a close, he felt that he must stand by Grant, even if it cost him the presidency. He called upon the North for more men. By this time the people had learned to love and trust Lincoln, and they rallied round him, shouting: "We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand strong." Again they elected him President.

In the Congress of January, 1865, Lincoln's lifelong dream and hope became a great reality when an amendment was added to the *Constitution of the United States*, forever forbidding slavery in every part of the United States, North and South alike. In his second

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inaugural address, delivered March 4, 1865, Lincoln said: "Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away . . . With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan,—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

But it was not until after Sherman had marched through Georgia (The Northern army, on April 3, 1865, had entered Richmond, and Lee, on April 9, had finally surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Court House.) that the war was over. When the news of Lee's surrender reached the White House, Lincoln met with his Cabinet, and at his word, silently and in tears, they knelt and gave humble thanks to God.

The wildest delight swept the land. The long and terrible war between the Blue and the Gray was over! The Union was saved! The slaves were free! Abraham Lincoln was hailed as the great friend of the people, the liberator of an oppressed race. Lincoln went to Richmond, the recent capital of the Southern Confederacy. He passed a group of negroes digging at a river landing. One of them, an old man, saw Lincoln, leaped forward, and cried, exulting: "Bress de Lord, dere is de great Messiah! I knowed him as soon as I seed him. He's bin in my heart fo' long yeahs, and he's cum at las' to free his chillum from dere bondage! Glory Hallelujah!" The old negro fell on his knees and kissed Lincoln's feet. Surrounded by kneeling negroes, Lincoln spoke: "Don't kneel to me. Kneel to God only, and thank Him for liberty."

Lincoln had no hatred for the South. He honored the valor of the Southern soldiers and generals. He called Stonewall Jackson a "Brave, honest soldier," and once, when looking at Lee's picture, he said: "It is the face of a brave and noble man."



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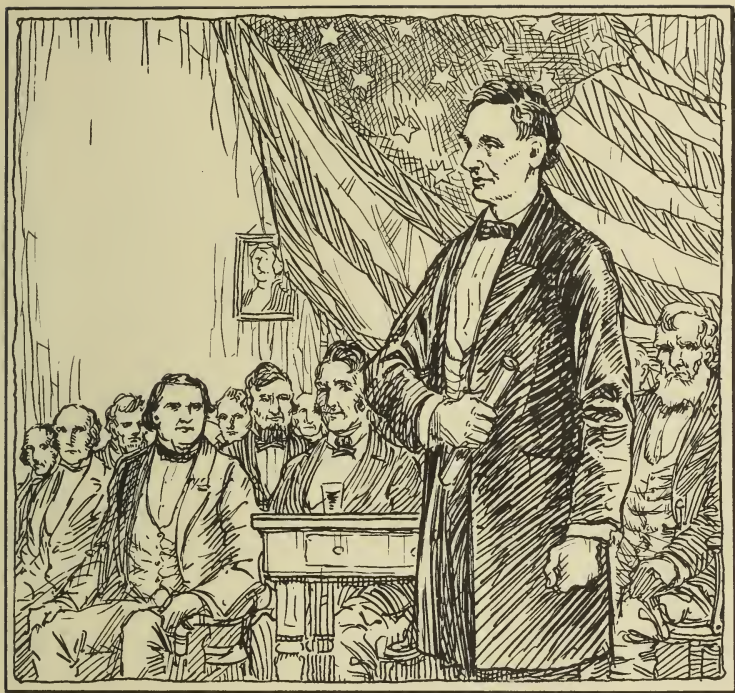
## “NOW HE BELONGS TO THE AGES”

GREAT of heart and mind, the kindly Lincoln has won the hearts of the people as few men in all the world's history have ever won them. He once remarked that “God must love the common people, he made so many of them.” It has been said that he never forsook a friend or lost an opportunity to do a kind deed, be it ever so humble a one. His last official act was one of mercy: he signed a pardon for a soldier who had been sentenced to be shot for desertion, and, as he did so, Lincoln remarked: “I think the boy can do us more good above ground than under ground.”

The evening of the very day when he signed this pardon, April 14, 1865, he went to the Ford Theatre with Mrs. Lincoln, to see the play, “Our American Cousin.” His box was draped with flags; the happy excitement of war ended, victory won, and peace promised, was everywhere. At twenty minutes after ten o'clock, when all eyes were on the stage, a pistol shot rang out. Lincoln fell forward in his chair, his assassin leaped to the stage, caught his spur in a flag, fell, broke his leg, but succeeded in getting to the stage door and riding away on a horse. Mrs. Lincoln cried out: “He has murdered the President.” Lincoln was carried to a house opposite, where he lay silently all night—while all Washington watched, praying for his life—but the next morning, without regaining consciousness, he died. Stanton, his great friend, whispered to those about the bedside: “Now he belongs to the ages.”

From that day to this all the world has paid tribute to Abraham Lincoln, the poor, homely, awkward backwoods boy who rose to the highest station possible within his country. By his virtuous deeds and his great kindnesses, he has endeared himself to liberty-loving mankind for all time. He is now revered as the “Savior of his Country,” a “Masterpiece of God.”





The debates with Douglas, in 1858, brought Lincoln's talents and ability into nation-wide prominence.



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